

MINUTES
WILLMAR POLICE COMMISSION
Thursday, April 22, 2021

A meeting of the Willmar Police Civil Service Commission was held on Thursday, April 22, 2021, at the Law Enforcement Center in Willmar.

Present were Police Civil Service Commission members President Dennis Anfinson, Vice President Mike Kubesh, and Secretary Earline Schulstad. Police Chief Jim Felt and Administrative Assistant Sue Edwards were also present.

The meeting was called to order by President Anfinson at 8:40 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kubesh, seconded by Commissioner Schulstad, to approve the March 31, 2021 minutes as submitted. **Motion carried.**

The Commission was provided with the final results of the entry level police officer testing process, including written test scores and oral interview scores. The Chief felt this was one of the strongest overall groups of candidates that have been interviewed in some time. There were 16 candidates interviewed; some with prior law enforcement or security/corrections experience, many had Bachelor's degrees, a couple non-traditional students, and a number of women and minority candidates. Commissioner Anfinson explained that he had participated on the interview panel and felt there were a lot of good candidates, with a lot of potential. Chief Felt explained the Police Department may have three openings by the end of this year or the beginning of 2022. The Department needs to replace Officer Wortham immediately; Officer Schneider will be retiring at the end of June; and Officer Jahnke at the end of January, 2022.

After discussion, Commissioner Kubesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schulstad, to set the cut-off at 70% on the final scores, establishing the eligibility register by certifying the top 13 names of qualified candidates; and to send out background packets to the top six candidates. **Motion carried.**

Miscellaneous

Chief Felt informed the Commission that Officer Haycraft will remain on light duty for the next month or month and a half. Officer Alex Heck will be out for 6 to 8 weeks, as he broke his ankle on Tuesday.

CSO Rachel Mork will be leaving to attend the Skills Program in Alexandria in May. Chief Felt explained that three new CSOs had been hired in March; Amal Muse, Zach Haney, and Heather Gerads.

The Forensic Technology Analyst position at the WPD was posted and an ad placed in the West Central Tribune, with the application deadline being April 30, 2021. Chief Felt is hoping to conduct interviews for this position sometime in May.

Chief Felt informed the Commission that there have been some performance issues with a probationary employee, and gave a synopsis of some of the concerns brought up by supervisors and Field Training Officers regarding this employee. After further discussion, Commissioner Kubesh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schulstad, that if the probationary employee doesn't show improvement and does not meet the training standards, that the candidate not be certified to the appointing authority, and be separated from the Willmar Police Department within the probationary period. **Motion carried.**

Chief Felt outlined the recent changes by the Minnesota Legislature to MN Statute 609.066 (Authorized Use of Deadly Force by Peace Officers) and the late notice and interpretations by the MN Attorney General's Office. Due to significant law changes, the Willmar Police Department is working on a new directive to guide officers on dealing with mental health related calls and suicidal individuals.

Discussion on how police officers are being viewed with everything going on in the country right now; not being protected, and being held under a microscope. Chief Felt explained that the department is trying to figure out ways to keep morale up and are monitoring morale within the department in order to retain the employees we have.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Kubesh, seconded by Commissioner Schulstad. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Secretary Earline Schulstad
by Sue Edwards